

Regarding Point V

1. Prior Art

In this opinion, reference is made to the following documents:

D1: DE 198 08 273 A

D2: US-A-5,442,720

D3: US-A-5,011,262

D4: US-A-4,770,535

2. Novelty and Inventive Step (Articles 33(1), (2), (3) PCT)

1. The subject matter of claim 1 is novel for the following reasons:
2. Document D1 is regarded as the closest prior art. This document discloses all the features set forth in the preamble of Claim 1.
3. The device according to Claim 1 differs from D1 in that the measuring probe system includes a plurality of measuring probes coupled to the common optical path via respective optical paths, and in that a switching device is disposed between the common optical path and the respective optical paths, said switching device allowing the different measuring probes to be individually brought into a bidirectionally transmitting connection with the transmitter/receiver unit.
4. A bidirectional switching device between a common optical path and the respective optical paths is not disclosed or suggested by any of the available documents (D1-D4). US'720 describes an input switch and an output switch (monodirectional) for each measuring probe; US'262

describes an output switch (monodirectional) for each measuring probe; and US'535 discloses a monodirectional switching device at the detector output.

5. Claims 2-7 are dependent on Claim 1 and therefore also meet the requirements of the PCT with regard to novelty and inventive step.

3. Industrial Applicability (Article 33(1), (4) PCT)

The subject matter of the present application is industrially applicable.

Miscellaneous

The specification does not mention documents D2-D4 nor does it specify the relevant prior art disclosed therein (Rule 5.1(a)(ii) PCT).